

Message Text

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SUBJ: FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AT COLORED UNIVERSITY

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 453, (B) CAPE TOWN 451

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE GOVERNMENT HAS APPOINTED TWO COMMITTEES TO INVESTIGATE STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND HANDLE READMISSIONS AT CLOSED COLORED UNIVERSITY. MEANWHILE STUDENTS SEEK FURTHER SUPPORT FOR THEIR DEMANDS WHILE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS WORRIES ABOUT FURTHER DETERIORATION OF RACE RELATIONS.

2. FOLLOWING SNAP DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT JUNE 14 GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED MEMBERS OF TWO MULTI- RACIAL COMMITTEES WHOSE OVERALL PURPOSE WILL BE TO TRY SOLVE DEADLOCK AT CLOSED (COLORED) UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE (UWC). ONE COMMITTEE WILL INVESTIGATE GRIEVANCES CONTAINED IN STUDENT MEMORANDUM AND THE OTHER WILL HANDLE READMISSION OF STUDENTS, A REQUIREMENT IMPOSED BY UNIVERSITY COUNCIL WHEN IT DECIDED CLOSE UNIVERSITY. BOTH
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COMMITTEES CHAIRED BY WHITE PROF. C. F. GUNTER, CHAIRMAN OF UWC COUNCIL. FIRST COMMITTEE HAS ONE COLORED AMONG NINE MEMBERS WHILE SECOND CONTAINS FOUR WHITE MEMBERS PLUS NINE UWC STAFF ADVISORY MEMBERS OF WHICH THREE ARE COLORED INCLUDING UNIVERSITY'S ONLY COLORED SENIOR LECTURER, POET- PHILOSOPHER ADAM SMALL. FIRST MEETING SCHEDULED JULY 4.

3. SNAP DEBATE, WHICH UNDER HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY RULES MAY LAST 30 MINUTES, WAS CALLED BY MYBURGH STREICHER, CHAIRMAN OF UNITED PARTY'S COLORED AFFAIRS GROUP. HE ASKED FOR SPEEDING UP APPOINTMENT OF COLORED STAFF TO UNIVERSITY (ON TEACHING STAFF THERE ARE NOW 12 COLOREDS AND 79 WHITES), AN END TO CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE OF WHITE STAFF AND TO TREATMENT OF STUDENTS AS HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS. HOWEVER HE DISAPPROVED OF STUDENTS ANYWHERE WHO INTIMIDATED STAFF AND OTHER STUDENTS.

4. IN REPLY, MINISTER OF COLORED AFFAIRS VAN DER MERWE, IN ADDITION TO APPOINTING COMMITTEES MENTIONED, (A) CONCEDED THAT SOME OF STUDENT GRIEVANCES MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED, (B) EXPECTED 95 TO 98 PERCENT OF READMISSIONS WOULD BE JUST A FORMALITY, (C) SAID COLORED ACADEMICS WERE ENCOURAGED APPLY FOR POSITIONS AND IF QUALIFICATIONS JUSTIFIED IT THEY WOULD BE GIVEN PREFERENCE OVER WHITES. HE ALLEGED 10 OF 13 APPLICATIONS FROM COLOREDS HAD BEEN ACCEPTED TO DATE BUT ADDED COLOREDS NOT YET IN POSITION TAKE OVER RUNNING OF UNIVERSITY; (D) STATED UWC CLOSURE NOT RELATED TO STUDENT GRIEVANCES BUT WAS CAUSED BY OUTBREAKS OF DISORDER. STUDENT LEADER HENRY ISAACS HAD BECOME MEMBER OF SASO WHICH BELIEVED IN BLACK REVOLUTION. LATER HE MADE PRESS STATEMENTS LEADING TO HIS SUSPENSION AND BANNING FROM CAMPUS WHICH HE IGNORED. INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION WITH AUTHORITIES WAS FOLLOWED BY STUDENT DISRUPTION OF CLASSES, BRANDISHING OF BANNERS SUCH AS ONE WHICH READ " DIALOGUE NO, CONFRONTATION YES" AND SINGING OF PROVOCATIVE SONGS.

5. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS SEVERAL COLORED MASS MEETINGS PASSED RESOLUTIONS CONDEMNING EXPULSION OF STUDENTS AND RAISED MONEY FOR STUDENT ACTION COMMITTEE WHICH HOPES GAIN WIDE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENT DEMANDS (REF A). DAVID CURRY, DEPUTY LEADER OF COLORED OPPOSITION LABOR PARTY, CALLED ON PARENTS TO COME OUT OF HIDING AND SUPPORT STUDENTS. UWC LECTURER ADAM SMALL SAW UNREST AS CONCERNED WITH TOTAL STRUCTURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOCIETY WHICH " IS VERY SICK AND PERHAPS EVEN ROTTEN TO THE CORE".

UWC SITUATION APPEARED TO HIM AS ONE OF TOTAL DEADLOCK " BECAUSE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION WOULD IMPLY COMING OF A TRULY FREE AND JUST SOUTH AFRICA". OTHER STATEMENTS SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND UWC BLACK STAFF ASSOCIATION ALSO CAME FROM NUSAS, SASO AND CAPE TOWN UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL.

6. CAPE TOWN ENGLISH- LANGUAGE PRESS SAW UNIVERSITY CLOSURE IN OVERALL RACIAL CONTEXT. CAPE TIMES TERMED IT AS " YET ANOTHER STORM WARNING AS RACE RELATIONS DETERIORATE IN THE REPUBLIC". ARGUS CONCLUDED THAT " A LONG- TERM SOLUTION CAN ONLY COME WITH EMERGENCE OF A SOCIETY IN WHICH THE COLORED PEOPLE ARE ACCORDED AN EQUAL RECOGNITION AND STATUS".

7. COMMENT: WHILE MUCH EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO COOL SITUATION BEFORE UNIVERSITY' S SCHEDULED MID- JULY REOPENING, THOSE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS WHO WANT NO COMPROMISE WILL ALSO BE ACTIVE. THUS OUTCOME EXPECTED REMAIN UNCERTAIN FOR SOME TIME.
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